

APPENDIX B

Nothing About Me Without Me: Planning for Public Library Services for People with Disabilities

Outcomes of the 2002-2004 Initiative of Library Development Services, California State Library

In 2002, Library Development Services (LDS) announced a two-year, statewide initiative to help public libraries develop and initiate services to people with disabilities. 128 libraries applied to participate; of these 31 were awarded LSTA grants for the first year, which was devoted to planning.

To assist the libraries in service design, implementation, and outcomes measurement, they were provided with:

- a specially created planning process and manual
- nine days of intensive training (four workshops given over a fifteen month period) were provided to three-person teams -- consisting of a frontline librarian, a library administrator, and a community partner -- on an array of new information and skills. Topics included disability awareness, collaboration, accessible technology, grant writing, and outcomes measurement
- community awareness study of five participating communities plus two control group communities

At the end of the first project year, the libraries submitted LSTA applications for implementation of their projects. For a variety of reasons, only 28 libraries received grants. All the project plans included outcome measurement as well as traditional evaluation components.

This report on the project outcomes is informed by the findings of pre-and post training surveys for each of the first three workshops; three “homework assignments” (sections of the grant application) done by participants; an evaluation discussion at the last workshop; a “reunion” meeting at the California library Association conference in November 2004; quarterly and final reports of each project; an end-of-project survey; a survey re OM done after the project year; and the community awareness study done by Harder + Harder, an outside market research firm.

I. User Outcomes

II. Anticipated Intermediate User Outcomes

The participating libraries were required to identify one intermediate user outcome that would be achieved during the project year, and one long-range user outcome that would take longer than a year to achieve. The libraries designed data collection plans for the intermediate outcome and were asked to report the results in the final report. Unfortunately, more than half (15) of the projects did not complete the outcome measurement before the reports were due to the State

Library. A typical comment: “While we did not accomplish all that we wanted, we feel that we have made a good start toward universal access.”

Here is a sample of the anticipated user outcomes that may or may not be achieved, as the outcome measurement has not been done yet:

- Parents of children with learning disabilities will increase their knowledge of learning disabilities, will become proficient in the use of the library’s new assistive technology and will help their children with it.
- Patrons with disabilities will check out videos and books from our new collection on vocational skills, will attend programs on work skills and preparation, and will write resumes to be more fully prepared for employment.
- People who cannot physically visit the library will have new or increased access to information and referrals on medical, legal, and general interest questions through toll-free phone, e-mail and/or live chat reference.
- Individuals with mobility disabilities will enjoy the independence of having first-time library services delivered/ mailed to them.
- Children with learning disabilities will use the library [beyond group visits] more frequently to use the special technology and to borrow library materials.
- Literacy tutors will be more knowledgeable about learning disabilities and more able to meet the needs of their learners with LD.
- Adults with developmental disabilities will increase their use of the library and will appreciate improved customer service delivered by a staff that demonstrates greater sensitivity and self-confidence in serving this population.
- Young adults with developmental disabilities will learn a new life skill (e.g. how to do a job interview) and show enhanced self-esteem.
- Older adults and others with sensory and/or physical disabilities will be able to read library or personal material independently.

III. Outcomes Achieved by Users

Unfortunately, most of the libraries are unable to report outcomes yet, due to late starts on their projects. The most commonly cited reasons are late release of funds, conflict between jurisdiction’s and state library’s fiscal years, library construction, and turnover of project staff or library management. Other delays were caused by the lengthy process of obtaining authorization from the CA Department of Justice to perform fingerprint checks on volunteers, and IT difficulties such as mounting new software and peripherals on already loaded computers.

The libraries that have been able to see the outcomes of their projects are justifiably excited. As one anonymous librarian stated “The achievements of this grant are what I’m proudest of in my whole career.” Below are examples of outcomes that have been achieved and measured.

At the Rosebud branch of the Lake County Library, 97% of the people with disabilities who used the assistive technology reported on a survey that, because of the new equipment, they had been able to solve at least one problem in their personal lives. 84% reported that they felt they had increased their connectivity with other people by using the assistive technology (e.g. email with

friends and relatives). In addition, 94% of the monitored (observed) people with disabilities successfully mastered a new adaptive device or task using assistive technology.

At the Fresno County Library pre and post surveys were conducted with patrons with developmental disabilities, caregivers, and community organizations. The library had predicted and met an interim outcome of increased use. At the end of the grant program, 98% said that they used it often (as compared to 51% before), 2% said they came sometimes (as compared to 31% before) and 0% said they did not come often (as compared to 15% before). Also, the number of respondents reporting that they attended at least two programs during the past year increased from 54% in the pre-survey to 98% in the post-survey. A second interim outcome was that 50% of people with developmental disabilities who participated in the library programs and services will show an increase in social, recreational, literacy, or life skills. Interviews with program participants and caregivers showed that 75% of those interviewed could identify specific improvements gained from their involvement with the project.

The Benicia Public Library, in cooperation with the high school's Workability program, the Independent Living Center, and a local organization on disability, sponsored a job fair for people with mobility disabilities. In interviews with participants, the library found that 33% of participants (2 out of 6 attendees) gained employment as a direct result of leads from the fair, and an additional 33% (2 people) created a resume as a result of the library's program.

The Long Beach Public Library wanted people who use the newly created and grant-funded] Information Center for People with Disabilities to learn how to use the assistive technology and do so independently. Approximately 100 users have achieved this outcome. The library also had predicted a 20% increase in use of the Homebound Reader Services; it achieved a 29% increase.

At the Marin County Free Library, 66% of the users of the Beyond Walls Service [in-home delivery to older adults with disabilities] indicated on a survey that they feel less isolated from the Marin community due to their participation in the program.

The Sacramento Public Library wanted to assist deaf people with their information needs by providing reference services in ASL. During the last four months of the grant project, 67 deaf users reported that they learned something for their homework assignments or improved their reading ability from the library's ASL interpreters and reference assistants. The library also wanted to help deaf people to learn how to use the Internet and email and to use it independently as a means of communicating with deaf and hearing people. 100% of the people (12) who attended the computer courses given in sign language set up email accounts for themselves and 80% have returned to the library to use them or have reported using the accounts elsewhere.

The San Bernardino County Library wanted to provide special needs families with community programs that gave the children an opportunity for early socialization with typically developing children. The library integrated the special needs children into their existing LITE (Literacy, Information, Technology, and Education) Center programs for 0-3 year olds, 3-5 year olds, and 0-5 year olds. During each quarter of FY 2003-04, an average of 41 special needs children and their parents interacted with an average of 60 typically developing children and their parents in 14 parent/child socialization programs.

Library Outputs

All but two of the libraries (which have not yet begun their projects) reported impressive outputs. Multiple libraries:

- Acquired and circulated print and non-print collections on disabilities
- Developed and circulated collections of materials specifically for people with learning disabilities or developmental disabilities
- Acquired assistive equipment for people with learning or developmental disabilities
- Developed and circulated collections of close captioned videos, signed videos and/or videos on sign language
- Expanded and circulated large type, Braille and/ or audio collections
- Improved the accessibility of the library website
- Launched websites about their new programs/ services
- Purchased accessible computer workstations
- Loaded designated computers with assistive software of all types
- Purchased alternative screens, keyboards, and mice
- Provided training and assistance on the new software and hardware
- Purchased reading machines and provided training in its use
- Held workshops on sign language
- Held story hours in sign language
- Held story hours for special needs children
- Adapted library procedures and policies to meet the needs of people with disabilities (e.g. extended loan periods)
- Presented programs designed for people with developmental disabilities
- Presented programs for parents of children with special needs
- Purchased hand-held and page magnifiers for public use in the library
- Purchased electronic magnifiers (CCTVs) and report high usage
- Purchased adjustable lighting and/or magnified lighting
- Purchased adjustable tables
- Purchased ergonomic and adaptive chairs for workstations and/or reading areas
- Purchased scooters and/or walkers with baskets for public use and report high usage
- Purchased assistive listening devices for use by individuals in the library and/or assistive listening systems for auditoriums
- Began or expanded a book delivery service to people with disabilities
- Began or expanded a books-by-mail service for people with disabilities
- Increased bookmobile stops at senior centers, retirement and assisted living residences
- Created and distributed publicity about the new programs/ services in large type and alternative formats
- Held public workshops about disabilities
- Held staff training on disabilities

- Improved signage
- Lowered height of service counters
- Automatic door openers on restrooms and outside (front) doors
- Initiated a book club at a senior center
- Joint programs with the city's Adaptive Recreation program and the Regional Center on DD
- Presented programs on sign language for the non-deaf community
- Presented programs on deaf culture and other topics for deaf people, including a deaf storytelling event
- Offered reference service in sign language
- Autism support groups meet regularly at the library
- Acquired a collection of manipulatives for pre-school children with learning disabilities
- Acquired document holders, page turners, and reaching devices
- Acquired reading pens

In addition, at least one library:

- Designed and produced 80 pictograms (pictures representing popular Dewey Decimal categories) on signage for the collections in the adult, children and YA areas
- Created volunteer opportunities at the library for people with disabilities and doubled the number of library volunteers with disabilities
- Increased the number of staff members with disabilities
- Added a person with a disability to the Library Board
- Developed a community resource directory
- Coordinated a job fair for people with disabilities
- Sponsored a Learning Disabilities Fair.
- Assembled, catalogued and circulated theme/ skill based activity kits for adults with developmental disabilities
- Has a library representative on the city's Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities
- Produced a video on serving individuals with developmental disabilities
- Produced a video on learning disabilities
- Created a developmental toy library
- Acquired and is circulating a collection of Braille books
- Acquired plastic baskets for patrons to use to carry materials within the library

Staff Outcomes: Staff Training

IV. Grantee Training

Nine days of intensive training (four workshops given over a fifteen month period) were provided to all grantee libraries. The participants were overwhelmingly positive about the workshops, especially the first. They had high praise for all the presenters (except one --on non-

LSTA grant writing) and were excited and grateful for the opportunities to hear about each other's projects and to get LDS feedback on their drafts of each section of their applications. The inclusion of a visit to the CSUN assistive technology exhibits during workshops number one and four was also valued highly. Librarians and community partners report that the intensive training was a major strength of the project and a benefit that will serve them well beyond the life of the LSTA-funded project.

In OM terms, however, the popularity of the training is beside the point. For each workshop, the consultant wrote learning outcomes, which were then measured by pre and post- workshop surveys.

In December 2002, the grantee libraries each sent a team of two people to *workshop number one* for training on disabilities themselves and on the first four steps of the planning process. The learning outcomes defined for the workshop were:

- Participants will be able to explain the special library needs of people with at least two of the seven most common disability types.
- Participants will rate themselves as more comfortable with disabilities than they had been before the workshop.
- Participants will rate their knowledge of the first four steps of the planning process as good or excellent.
- Participants will rate their comfort level with using the first four steps of the planning process as good or excellent.

The first two learning outcomes were achieved by 100% of participants in both the northern and southern California sessions. The second two outcomes were achieved by 90% of participants.

In March 2003, teams of three people (two from the library and a community partner) from each project attended workshop number *two*. The learning outcomes were:

- Participants will rate themselves as more aware about assistive technology for specific disability groups than they were before the workshop
- Participants will rate themselves as more knowledgeable about outcomes measurement than they were before the workshop
- Participants will rate themselves as more comfortable about doing outcomes measurement than they were before the workshop

The first learning outcome was achieved by 89% of the participants re concepts and products for people with visual impairments; 81% re people with physical/ mobility impairments; 54% re people with hearing impairments; and 54% re people with developmental disabilities.

95% of participants achieved the second learning outcome and 72% the third learning outcome.

In May 2003, the three person teams attended *workshop number three*, which included a visit to the exhibits at the CSUN Conference on Accessible Technology. The learning outcomes were:

- Participants will rate themselves as more knowledgeable about volunteerism -- and more able to explain it to colleagues -- than they were before the workshop
- Participants will rate themselves as more knowledgeable -- and more able to explain it to colleagues -- about community collaboration than they were before the workshop
- Participants will rate themselves as more knowledgeable -- and more able to explain it to colleagues -- about outcomes measurement than they were before the workshop
- Participants will rate themselves as more knowledgeable -- and more able to explain it to colleagues -- about non-LSTA funding than they were before the workshop

95% of participants achieved the first outcome; 90% achieved the second outcome; 85% achieved the third; and 67% the fourth. Also, 89% reported confidence that they could complete an OM plan for their project and 95% reported confidence that they could write the LSTA application by the deadline.

March 2004 was the last workshop of the initiative. The goals were to enable participants to attend the CSUN conference exhibits on accessible technology for a second time, to allow them to network with their peers, and to enable them to give feedback to LDS on the components of the initiative. Learning outcomes were not used.

Overall, the “proof” of the training’s success is that 100% of the libraries (28) wrote successful implementation grant applications. 93% (26) wrote credible outcomes measurement plans; the other 2 libraries (Commerce and Los Angeles Public Library) never fully grasped outcomes measurement as evidenced in their final reports. Commerce expressed concern that they were moving from hard evidence in the form of metrics (number of levels of reading ability) to the softer evidence of how learners use their reading gains.

The comments on one end-of-project evaluation form summarized the opinions of the majority: “The required planning steps have been notably essential and would serve as a model for any organization. The State Library’s insistence that we develop strong relationships with community partners has been a most successful strategy. We have greatly increased our knowledge and awareness of community needs. We are much more prepared to provide services to our patrons with disabilities... We can now offer more equal access, and because of the ability awareness training, we are better prepared to appropriately provide individual services.”

V. Staff Training at the Grantee Libraries

The disability awareness training (for librarians only) was an eye-opener to most and was replicated by many libraries for their own staff members.

“Even our staff members most resistant to change commented that the ability awareness was valuable.” (Del Norte) “Feedback from library and city staff was extremely positive, including the comment that it [disability awareness training] was ‘the best training ever offered in the city.’” (South San Francisco Public Library)” “The results of our pre- and post- training questionnaire indicated from 75% to 187% increase of knowledge and comfort level for the four employee training sessions offered...[which indicates] partial progress toward our intermediate

outcome that library staff will have more confidence and proficiency in providing appropriate responsive service for individuals with disabilities..." (Torrance Public Library)

Library Outcomes

Although outcomes for the library were not the major focus of this initiative, many libraries voluntarily reported on them.

Del Norte County Library was offered \$37,000 of leftover community development block grant money by the county. The City committed \$50,000 in discretionary funds to help the library address the new ADA Compliance Plan.

VI.

VII. *Alhambra Public library decided to integrate its grant-purchased LD materials into the general collection. "Circulation figures increased notably following the integration of the materials."*

At Pasadena Public Library, a staff member completed the CSU Northridge Assistive Technology Applications Certificate Program.

Stockton-San Joaquin County Library reported that "Useful contacts with vendors that specialize in products and services for the visually impaired have been established, providing a firm foundation for the future development of resources. The opportunity to research publishers and software/ multi-media distributors also acquainted selection staff with specialized services accessible to people with disabilities; this introduction will lead to an efficient expansion and replacement of the collection as new materials become available.

Whittier Public Library found that the accessible workstations developed for people with mobility disabilities are being used enthusiastically by people with cognitive disabilities and that the goals and services to the Mobility Center needed to be adjusted accordingly.

A number of participating libraries report that, as a result of this project, they have new and lasting community partnerships. As the Del Norte County Library reports: "The State Library's insistence that we develop strong relationships with community partners has been a most successful strategy." Oakland Public Library concurs: "One of the strongest feature of this statewide project was the insistence on a community partner." Glendale Public Library writes: "We are very pleased with the directions this project has led us in as a community service. The contacts and partnerships that we made in the process of defining the service, and the opportunity to become more engaged in the effort to improve the quality of life for individuals in our community, are invaluable." Mono County Library reports: "The support of our community partner was instrumental...Other relationships have also been forged and further cemented through this program..." Pasadena Public Library: "The greatest success [of this project] was the development of relationships with our community partner and the advisory groups..." Sutter County Library: "The library developed particularly strong partnerships with the Yuba City Unified School District Special Education Department and the Yuba Community College Disabled Students Programs and Services. The library also worked very closely with the Sutter

County Schools, Sutter County Parent Network, Yuba Sutter Head Start, and a number of specific schools...The success of these partnerships contributed to the success of the project during the grant period, now giving us a good working platform on which to build, and has helped us address our need for local networking among agencies.”

A number of libraries comment that their non-print collections -- and their circulation --have grown dramatically as a result of this project. Hemet Public library reports, “The size of our video/DVD collection grew by over 150% due to the funds from this grant. Our books-on-tape and CD collection grew over 100%. According to our circulation statistics, use of the collection from January through June 2004 increased by 47% from the same time last year.” Alhambra Public Library reports, “The LD materials are circulating phenomenally”. Sutter County Library reports that it “was basically a print collection. We took the traditional high road, and valued and provided the printed word; non-print materials were made available only as novelty items or as a source of library revenue. Our great “aha” moment during this needs assessment and grant planning process was when we realized that, even with a very limited collection development and operating budget, we had a responsibility to our community to provide resources and materials that would be accessible to [an estimated 17,000] LD users...We are no longer just a traditional print collection, providing services only for traditional readers...”

The Long Beach Public Library states, “This project has been successful beyond our wildest dreams. Over 1533 people have visited the [newly created and grant-funded] Information Center for People with Disabilities [in the 11 months since it opened]. The Center has won three awards: Award of Recognition from the Long Beach Citizens Advisory Commission on People with Disabilities; the Disabled Resources Center Community Service Award; and the California League of Cities Award for Service Excellence.”

VIII. Community & Library Outcomes: Community Awareness Study

A community awareness telephone survey was conducted in a sample group of five participating libraries and a control group of two non-participating libraries. A professional market research firm called residents before the LSTA grant projects were initiated and then again afterwards. The Executive Summary on the post-test reports:

Increase in Awareness of Services for People with Disabilities

Overall, 61% of all respondents in the communities of the participating libraries and 37% of all respondents in the communities of the control libraries reported that they knew about the library’s services for people with disabilities.

Respondents who indicated they had a disability that affected their use of the library showed an increase in awareness of services for people with disabilities from the pre to the post-test. Awareness was examined by type of reported disability and appears to have increased in all categories.

IX. Reduction of Barriers to Library Use

The participating libraries showed a reduction in all barriers for those with disabilities. The largest reduction was in difficulty using the computers (-15%). Hours open and inability to find or reach materials both decreased by 12%.

Increase in Satisfaction with Library Services

The satisfaction ratings at the intervention libraries improved from the pre-test (adequate to good) to the post-test (good to outstanding). Post-test ratings for ease of using the library, accessibility of books and materials, library services for people with disabilities, attitudes of staff while assisting people with disabilities, and library services overall were all between good and outstanding. The pre-test ratings were between adequate and good.

Increase in Services Available for People with Disabilities

Each library completed a library scan detailing the types of services available at the library in 2003 and again in 2004. When the overall number of services offered by each library was reviewed, the participating libraries showed an increase in every category (alternative formats, accessible technology, and special services). In contrast, the two control libraries showed an increase in one category, no change in a category and a decrease in two categories.

The alternative format materials showed the greatest gain in the acquisition of described videos at three of the five intervention libraries. Other services that were added include talking books, Braille books and closed-caption videos.

Special services showed large gains in the participating libraries. All libraries added training and assistance in using the assistive technologies. Four of the five libraries added an advisory group of people with disabilities and volunteer technology assistance in the library.

Assistive technology also increased at the intervention libraries. Adjustable lighting with magnification was added in three of the five libraries. Assistive listening devices for use in the library, assistive listening system in meeting rooms/auditoriums, and electronic magnifiers (CCTV) were added by two of the five libraries.

On average, the participating and control libraries showed similar availability of services prior implementation of the Public Library Services for People with Disabilities Program. In the year since program implementation, the intervention libraries have added an average of nineteen services, and the control libraries have lost an average of three services. Thus, the gap between the two groups has widened significantly.

Suggestions for Next Time

In open discussion at the final workshop, participants unanimously recommended that the program be expanded to include more public libraries, using the same approach of community partnerships, manual, training, and technical assistance. The participants were asked then and in

a final survey what should be done differently if this initiative is repeated. The major responses were:

- Provide more training and more information in the manual on selecting and working with community partners
- Provide more training and more information in the manual on outcomes measurement
- Provide training and information in the manual on how to evaluate assistive technology
- Allow more project implementation time, especially if the release of grant funds is delayed at the state level as it was this past year
- Allow more evaluation time so that enough time elapses for outcomes to be achieved
- Include an IT person on each library team and/or Invite IT people from each grantee library to visit the CSUN exhibits
- Provide more training and more information in the manual on integrating the new services into the fabric of the library
- Fund site visits from one library to another serving the same disability group
- Provide sample applications and reports
- Redo user and non-user surveys, one per disability
- In manual, add tip sheet and resources for developmental disabilities
- Shorten the fourth workshop to one day with an optional second day at the CSUN exhibits

Participating Libraries (Grantees)

The libraries marked with * have no outcome data to report at this time.

- *Alhambra Public Library -- Learning disabilities
- Benicia Public Library -- Mobility
- Butte County Library -- Mobility
- *Commerce Public Library -- Learning disabilities
- *Del Norte County Public Library -- Developmental disabilities
- Fresno County Library -- Developmental disabilities
- *Glendale Public Library -- People 65+ with disabilities associated with aging
- *Hemet Public Library -- Mobility
- Lake County Library -- Mobility
- Long Beach Public Library -- Mobility
- *Los Angeles Public Library -- Vision
- Marin County Free Library -- People 65+ with disabilities associated with aging
- *Mono County Free Library -- Learning disabilities
- Nevada County Library -- Learning disabilities
- Oakland Public Library -- Learning disabilities
- Pasadena Public Library -- Developmental disabilities
- Plumas County Library -- Vision
- Sacramento Public Library -- Deaf
- San Bernardino County Library -- Special needs children
- *San Diego Public Library -- Developmental disabilities

- *Sonoma County Library -- Special needs children
- South San Francisco Public Library -- Mobility
- *Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library -- Vision
- *Sutter County Library -- Learning disabilities
- Torrance Public Library -- People 65+ with disabilities associated with aging
- *Ventura County Library -- Vision
- *Watsonville Public Library -- People 65+ with disabilities associated with aging/ mobility
- Whittier Public Library -- Mobility

Revised Report submitted by Rhea Joyce Rubin 3/10/05